The UMVRDC administers a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to assist existing businesses as well as new entrepreneurs in securing financing. The primary goal of the RLF program is to create new jobs and to retain jobs in the region. The UMVRDC welcomes partnering with other lenders to assist local area businesses to succeed and thrive.

The UMVRDC was a partner with the other financial institutions, gap lenders, and a USDA guaranty, in the construction/expansion of Do-Mat’s Family Foods in Benson. Through this project, 16 jobs will be retained along with creating two new jobs.

For more information contact Laura Ostlie at 320-289-1981 x 102, or email at laura@umvrdc.org. Visit www.umvrdc.org website for more details.

**Windy Block**

Public Interest Representative

Windy Block is the City Administrator for Clara City and joins the UMVRDC board as the newest public interest representative. Windy was raised in St. Peter and is a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College. Windy taught science in Montevideo for 11 ½ years, sold life insurance and investment products for Northwestern Mutual Life for 23 years, served as city administrator for Rushford, Minnesota for nearly five years before becoming the Administrator in Clara City which he has done for the past six years. Windy is also a member of the International City/County Management Association. Windy and his wife of 38 years reside in Montevideo.

**Diane Kepner**

Public Interest Representative

Diane Kepner, representing Prairie Five Community Action Council as a public interest representative, was recently assigned to the board from Prairie Five. She has been a Prairie Five board member for 30 years and also sits on the policy council for Head Start. Diane is very active in her church where she is also employed. She and her husband live in the Appleton area and enjoy attending sporting events at Lac qui Parle Valley High School.

The UMVRDC’s 2016 annual meeting was Tuesday, July 26th. The day consisted of touring the cities of Milan, Watson and Montevideo to get a firsthand look at projects the UMVRDC has been working on.

The first stop was at the Milan Village Arts School where John Larson explained the history of the school, its mission and also their role during the Meander Art Crawl. John is also an artist on the Meander so he shared the importance of the Meander for the Milan community and the region. Veronica Blommel, City Clerk and Merle Hilden, City Council member, also discussed projects the UMVRDC has helped the City with such as their website, comprehensive planning and the housing planning.

The tour then moved to Watson where Mayor Kyle Jones and City Clerk Susan Brickweg along with council member Georgette Jones met with the group. They spoke about projects in their community that resulted from their strategic planning that the UMVRDC helped with.

Starting in 2017 the Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Regional Tourism 5-County Program will be back to a 5-county program! It has been since 2008 since all five counties were a member. The UMVRDC is excited to welcome back Big Stone County and is looking forward to working with them to help promote and bring awareness to their county and the rest of the region!
Montevideo Arts Project
With a great amount of community support and a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, a historic railroad car was moved to a permanent location near the Depot. Public artist Liliana Payne was hired through a selection process to paint a mural on both sides of the railroad car. The project will be completed by the end of September 2016.

This is the second project by the Montevideo Arts Project (MAP). MAP is a volunteer driven organization made up of local citizens, business owners, city staff, elected officials, and chamber of commerce staff. The organization has a goal of creating access.

Transportation Alternative Projects Funding
The Southwest and West Central Area Transportation Partnerships will soon be soliciting Transportation Alternative projects for the year 2021.

Fast Facts:
- Eligible applicants include a state aid cities (cities over 5,000 population Montevideo in our region), counties, state agencies, and Upper Sioux Community. If you are not a state aid entity, you must have an eligible applicant sponsor your application.
- Projects must have a 20% local match.
- Eligible project include projects like trails, sidewalks, overlooks, environmental mitigation, safe routes to school projects.

To apply there is a two-step process:
1. Letter of Intent: to apply there is a short pre-application that will be due October 31, 2016. After submitting this, an onsite review of your project will be coordinated by the UMVRDC office. This process is intended to ensure that the project is feasible before the application for a full application.
2. Final applications will be due January 13, 2017. Application materials will be available by September 30. If you are thinking about a potential project or looking for local project examples, please contact the UMVRDC office for more information.

Contact Jacki at 320-289-1981 x 111 or jacki.anderson@umvrdc.org

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